

Ali Franks

Clonakenny Flower Farm



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The global pandemic gave Ali Franks the push she needed to set up the business she always dreamed of – a bespoke florist and flower farm.

Ali had been working as Head Chef in Cloughjordan House and was on maternity leave with her third child when the wedding venue had to temporarily close its doors.

Ali took this as a sign and started Clonakenny Flower Farm in June 2020 at her home just outside Roscrea in Co. Tipperary.

Before Covid, Ali and her husband Kenny had been buying polytunnels to grow flowers and vegetables like Ali's mother – and her mother before her – had done. Ali's mother was a florist and still sells her flowers at a local farmers market so the business was in Ali's blood.

The polytunnels are in the couple's field behind their house in the village of Clonakenny and they already had a good crop by the time the business started.

Ali began by selling flowers at the farm gate but word of mouth and social media raised her profile and she was approached by a local Neighbourhood outlet to supply them.

After doing flowers at a family wedding, Ali got bookings for seven other weddings and the business took off. As Covid restrictions ease, she expects business to boom as weddings return and hotels open; already bookings are increasing strongly.

Ali found the support from ACORNS was invaluable, especially during the pandemic. She learnt a lot about accounting and other issues that were new to her and the programme gave her the confidence to pursue the business seriously.

The couple recently bought a field adjoining their existing land to expand the business. They plan to run flower-arranging workshops in a barn they are converting and open the farm to the public at the weekends.

Providing early stage female entrepreneurs, living in rural Ireland, with the knowledge, support and networking opportunities to meet and even exceed their current aspirations.



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine